

I bear you my witness that we have a Father in heaven, that he is our Father, that we are his children, and that he loves us very much. I bear you my witness that his Only Begotten Son was sent to this earth to teach us the plan of salvation; that he was to live, to die, to resurrect; that through our repentance and acceptance of the plan of salvation, as taught by this Church, we could come back into the presence of our Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder A. Theodore Tuttle of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to us.

The congregation and choir will now join in singing, "Now Let Us Rejoice in the Day of Salvation," conducted by Jay E. Welch.

After the singing, Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, will address us.

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The choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Now Let Us Rejoice."

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#### President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Paul H. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy.

#### Elder John Longden

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

In President David O. McKay's keynote address at the commencement of this conference, this statement was made: "One supreme wish in my heart is that the spirit of this conference could be felt in every home in this world." I pray for that same influence to permeate the homes of the world.

During this conference, we have again raised our hands to sustain our Prophet, the First Presidency, and other General Authorities of the Church. We have welcomed into this group some new young men, and others have been reassigned, but all for one purpose and with one overriding call—to be personal representatives of Jesus Christ on the earth today.

It's a fair guess to say that throughout the Church today there will be several thousand people, young and old, called to positions of leadership and service in their respective branches, wards, stakes, and missions.

May I suggest that there is a solemn duty upon both groups to bring beautiful, spiritual peace to the earth.

#### Prepare ye

The Lord, speaking to the Prophet Joseph Smith, said: "Prepare ye,

prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh." (D&C 1:12.)

The scriptures are replete with admonitions to "prepare ourselves and our fellowmen for the good life here and hereafter."

"Hearken, and lo, a voice as of one sent down from on high, who is mighty and powerful, whose going forth is unto the ends of the earth, yea, whose voice is unto men—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (D&C 65:1.)

The preamble to the 65th section to the Doctrine and Covenants states:

"Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, . . . 1831. The Prophet designates this revelation as a prayer.—Commitment of the keys of the kingdom of God unto man—The kingdom of God and the kingdom of Heaven named separately—Supplication that the kingdom of God, already on earth, may go forth that the kingdom of Heaven may come."

This is scripture and is for all inhabitants of the world.

#### Keys of the kingdom

The Lord further states in this same section of the Doctrine and Covenants: "The keys of the kingdom of God

are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth.

"Yea, a voice crying—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom.

"Pray unto the Lord, call upon his holy name, make known his wonderful works among the people.

"Call upon the Lord, that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth, that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of Man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth.

"Wherefore, may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come, that thou, O God, mayest be glorified in heaven so on earth, that thine enemies may be subdued; for thine is the honor, power and glory, forever and ever. Amen." (D&C 65:2-6.)

### Most powerful weapon

Former President Eisenhower one evening had a few close friends at the White House in Washington, D. C. They were discussing world problems. For a long while, the President listened; then he said:

"My friends, the biggest, most powerful weapon in the world is not the atomic bomb, or even the fighting ability of men. It is their moral and spiritual strength. Nothing can ever conquer that strength. Remember this, gentlemen, because that is the weapon our enemies really fear."

Our message to the world is that moral and spiritual courage are needed to prepare the way.

### Meaning of preparedness

Preparedness has many connotations, and perhaps each of us thinks of it differently, at the same time agreeing on its basic principle.

Preparedness means to get ready for

a given event; if we are entertaining friends in our homes, we make ready the home and the refreshments, and so forth.

Unexpectedly I visited a home some time ago. In this home was a young lady afflicted with a dreadful disease. The mother answered the door and said, "Oh, Brother Longden, come in. I wondered why I was cleaning the house so well this morning. I didn't know a servant of God would be calling."

In this home they are already prepared and doing their bit to help others prepare the way. The gospel of Jesus Christ is their way of life, and it is that simple.

If we are holding a meeting, we prepare for that. Planning for a trip or a vacation, we prepare well in advance.

A few months ago I visited a mortuary in respect to a choice lady whom I had known for many years. In visiting with some of her children, one of the daughters said, "Mother was prepared to die, but Mother was prepared to live all her life." Knowing this lady, I concurred in this sincere tribute. Because of this one woman, many lives were better prepared to live.

### Constant preparation needed

The Lord, speaking to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1832, said:

"And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people.

"And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." (D&C 88:91-92.)

We can be prepared to meet him, either if we should be called to leave here, or if we should still be here at his second coming.

Three or four years ago, two young high school students were driving on Wasatch Boulevard in Salt Lake City. It was reported a man under the influ-

ence of liquor, driving the car coming in the opposite direction, came over the center line and rammed into their small car. They were killed instantly.

Each of them was a fine young man, not only holding the office of priest in the Aaronic Priesthood but honoring that priesthood by the way he lived. I attended the funeral service of one of them. Never have I attended one like it. The chapel and cultural hall were filled to overflowing, mostly by young people.

The remarks of a young student speaker impressed upon me the need for constant preparation, the need to be constantly prepared.

He said, addressing his remarks to the bereaved parents, "I have never seen your son say or do anything you would be ashamed of."

### Prepared to live eternally

Thirty-nine years ago, we buried our firstborn. Elder Adam S. Bennion spoke these words at our daughter's service:

"There are out beyond today for this young couple two gates. They will choose to open one of them. The first one swings to the touch of grief. It will open quickly and easily. It leads out into doubt and despair, even to bitterness. The other gate opens more slowly, isn't so promising to look at. It yields to the push of patience. I'm not sure that it doesn't swing better to a pull, but if it may be pulled through patience, it opens to hope and faith and confidence in God, consolation and mutual benediction. I know these two young people well enough to know which gate they will enter."

May I say now, after nearly forty years, this is true: pulling on that gate brings a deep sense of spiritual peace; come what may, it has helped us to ride over several stormy parts of our lives. Someone helped prepare the way for us. What have we done to help others? There may be sorrow, tragedy, commotion, frustration, tension, pressures, strife, troubles, and problems in this fast-moving world. Yet, in the gospel of Jesus Christ is the pattern which will extend comfort,

hope, and peace to the world. Living by its tenets, we are prepared to die; but more important, to live eternally.

The parables of Jesus, the scriptures, old and new, are filled with admonitions to prepare ourselves and help to prepare the way for others.

### Example of being prepared

It was my privilege this morning, just before the commencement of this conference, to shake hands with a former missionary companion. Forty-six years ago was our first meeting, as he indoctrinated me into the missionary service. Our paths have crossed many times. To me he is a living example of constantly being prepared. He now holds the high office of patriarch in the Hunter Stake.

I am reminded of a series of talks given from this podium by a prophet of the Lord several years ago; his name: Elder Albert E. Bowen. I would remind each of us of the title of these discourses, "Constancy Amid Change."

In the first prayer opening this conference, this statement was uttered: "May we get a stimulation to great action."

And now in conclusion, may I give you a thought from President David O. McKay: "Most earnestly do I hope that we shall never lose the great conviction that the world is our field of activity. Can you think of anything more potent in moving a people to action?"

"But what a responsibility this entails of leading good men and good women all over the world to know God, and to know what their mission is on earth!" (Instructions to Regional Representatives of the Twelve, September 27-28, 1967.)

I pray that we will constantly be prepared and know our mission on earth, and pray for his blessings upon us in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President N. Eldon Tanner

We have just listened to Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve.

We shall now hear from Elder Paul H. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy.